



Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency Faith-Based Mentoring Initiative

If you would like to become a mentor...

More than 2,000 individual will return to the District of Columbia from prison this year. As the cornerstone of our community, faith institutions have a long history of reaching out to those in need, particularly to prisoners. The CSOSA/Faith Community Partnerships seeks to expand this ministry to include the returning offender. By linking returning offenders with institutions and individuals who embody strong values, positive relationships, and hope, the Partnership complements the message of personal accountability and change that is the focus of community supervision.

What do mentors do?

During the transition from prison to community, returning offenders can be overwhelmed by both large and small problems—everything from getting a job to maintaining a residence to negotiating public transportation. Mentors work with CSOSA's Community Supervision Officers to address some of these problems. Most importantly, mentors provide individual support and guidance. They let the offender know that the community is invested in his or her success.

Mentors help in a variety of ways, such as:

- "Coaching" in job interview skills.
- Locating a clothing bank to obtain appropriate clothes for work.
- Introducing the offender to a faith institution's support services and leisure activities.
- Helping the offender to develop independent living skills, such as budgeting or shopping.
- Helping the offender negotiate changes in his or her relationships with family and loved ones.

How are mentors selected?

In order to become a mentor, you need to meet certain criteria:

- You must be affiliated with a participating faith institution. This does not have to be the house of worship to which you belong. If your institution does not participate, we will help you connect with one that does.
- You must complete an application and a personal interview with the Cluster Coordinator.
- You must complete 12 hours of initial training, which consists of three four-hour sessions.
- You must be willing to commit at least two hours per week, and you must be willing to stay with the program for six months.

For more information:

Contact the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA)
or your Cluster Coordinator:

Cluster A (Wards 7 and 8)
Abubakr Muhammad Karim (202) 373-5767
karim@ercpcp.org

Cluster B (Wards 5 and 6)
Rev. Lisa Fidderson (202) 547-1090
Lisalfdrm@aol.com

Cluster C (Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4)
Rev. Sharon Best (202) 291-5513
s_a_best@hotmail.com

CSOSA
Hal Williams, Jr. (202) 220-5603
hal.williams@csosa.gov



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If you have returned from prison...

We at the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) welcome you back to the District of Columbia. If you are on supervision, you are already aware of CSOSA, its network of services, and its emphasis on personal accountability. You may not be aware that we are working in partnership with the city's faith institutions to increase the support available to you. You may be eligible to join this initiative and receive mentoring services from a participating faith institution.

Eligibility

To receive mentoring services, you must meet the following criteria:

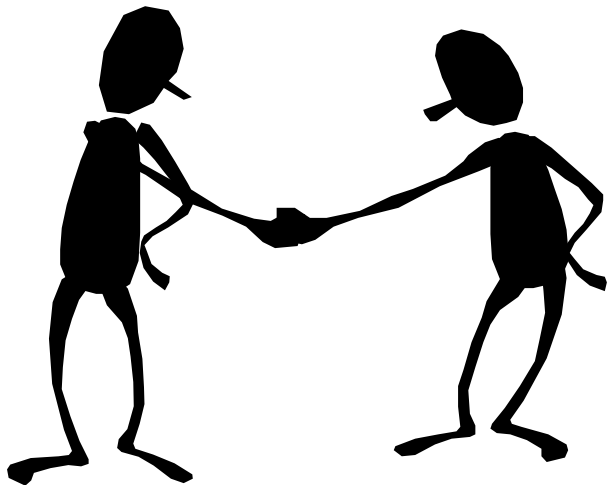
- ✓ You must be released from the Federal Bureau of Prisons to parole or supervised release. Probationers are not eligible for the program at this time.
- ✓ Sex offenders, offenders with non-stabilized mental health conditions, and offenders with a history of violence are excluded from participating.
- ✓ You must be in compliance with all conditions of release, including drug testing.
- ✓ You must have a period of supervision of at least one year.
- ✓ You must be willing to stay in the program for at least six months.

If you meet these criteria, **contact your Community Supervision Officer** about participating in the Mentoring Initiative. He or she will complete a screening. If you are eligible for the program, your information will be forwarded to the Cluster Coordinator in the area where you live. Your Community Supervision Officer will let you know if a mentor is available for you.

Activities

You may be assigned to a single mentor or a group of mentors within a faith institution. In either case, your mentoring experience will involve:

- ✓ Meeting with your mentor(s) at least once every week, usually at the faith institution.
- ✓ Working out a personal plan defining how mentoring can help you.
- ✓ Accessing faith-based support programs, such as job training, substance abuse aftercare, transitional housing, or family support.
- ✓ Opportunities to attend social or entertainment events with your mentor at his or her faith institution.
- ✓ Your mentor may help you with specific situations—such as giving you a ride to an appointment—but you should remember that mentors are there to help you decide what to do, not to do it for you.



**Mentors can help you
turn “coming back”
into “staying home.”**

**Contact your CSO
to learn more.**